ALASKA ECONOMIC TRENDS

MEASURING ALASKA'S COST OF LIVING

EMPLOYMENT CLIMBS TO RECORD HIGHS IN 1990

October 1990

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR STEVE COWPER, GOVERNOR

ALASKA ECONOMIC
TRENDS

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A Guide to Measuring Alaska's Cost of Living

by James R. Wilson and Brian N. Rae

The cost of living in Alaska, and the way costs have changed over time, are the most frequently requested pieces of information available from the Alaska Department of Labor's Research and Analysis section. Unfortunately, getting a handle on the cost of living in Alaska is not a straightforward process.

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A Measure of Inflation or Cost Differences by Area?

There are several different measures of the cost of living, and each has its strengths and weaknesses. First, decide if you are interested in the change in prices in one place over a period of time (commonly referred to as the inflation rate), or the cost difference between two places at one point in time. (Couched in questions like: How much more expensive is it to live in Fairbanks than Seattle?) Determining what you need to know will help select the best cost of living index for you.

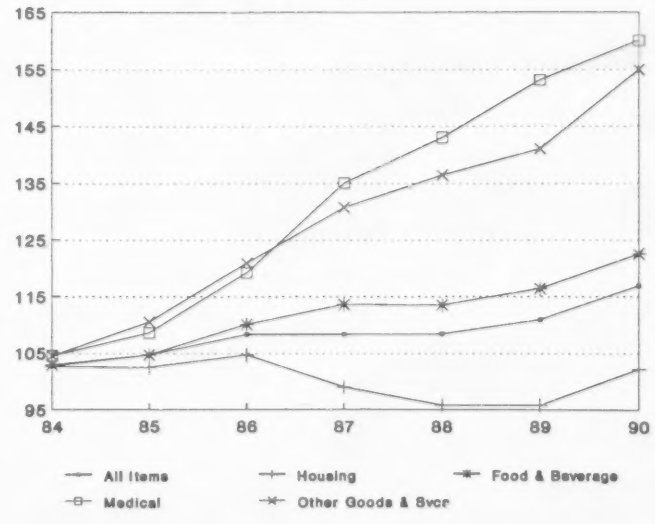
How Well Does the Survey's Market Basket Represent Your Buying Habits?

Since it is prohibitively expensive to price all items a consumer would purchase, cost of living surveys track price changes of a sample of items from various expenditure categories (such as housing expenses, medical expenses, food expenses, etc.). This sample of items is called the survey's market basket.

When you choose a cost of living survey, it's a good idea to know what the survey's market basket is, and what population's buying habits the survey is trying to simulate. All surveys either give a listing of the items which make up the market basket, or define the type of household which the market basket was designed to represent. For example, the Runzheimer data presented in this article assumes a family of four whose income level would be $32,000 in the average cost city of those surveyed.

Figure 1

Consumer Price Index — Anchorage
All Items & Selected Components 1984-1990*



* Data for first six months of year
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

The Consumer Price Index — The Nation's Inflation Measure

The majority of requests about Alaska's cost of living relate to how prices have changed over time. The information is

Table 1

Consumer Price Index – Urban Consumers
All Items and Selected Components
U.S. & Alaska

	All Items				All Items Less Shelter				Housing		Medical		Food & Beverage	
Year	U.S. annual average	Percent change	Anchorage annual average	Percent change	U.S. annual average	Percent change	Anchorage annual average	Percent change	U.S. annual average	Anchorage annual average	U.S. annual average	Anchorage annual average	U.S. annual average	Anchorage annual average
1960	29.6		34.4											
1965	31.5	6.4%	35.3	2.6%										
1970	38.8	23.2	41.1	16.4										
1975	53.8	38.7	57.1	38.9										
1980	82.4	53.2	85.5	49.7	82.9		84.7		81.1	85.9	74.9	78.8	86.7	89.7
1981	90.9	10.3	92.4	8.1	91.0	9.8%	92.0	8.6%	90.4	92.5	82.9	86.9	93.5	94.3
1982	96.5	6.2	97.4	5.4	96.2	5.7	96.3	4.7	96.9	98.2	92.5	94.8	97.3	97.2
1983	99.6	3.2	99.2	1.8	99.8	3.7	99.9	3.7	99.5	99.0	100.6	99.7	99.5	99.7
1984	103.9	4.3	103.3	4.1	103.9	4.1	103.8	3.9	103.6	102.7	106.8	105.5	103.2	103.2
1985	107.6	3.6	105.8	2.4	107.0	3.0	107.5	3.6	107.7	103.0	113.5	110.9	105.6	106.2
1986	109.6	1.9	107.8	1.9	108.0	0.9	111.2	3.4	110.9	102.6	122.0	127.8	109.1	110.8
1987	113.6	3.6	108.2	0.4	111.6	3.3	115.1	3.5	114.2	97.5	130.1	137.0	113.5	113.1
1988	118.3	4.1	108.6	0.4	115.9	3.9	117.8	2.3	118.5	95.4	138.6	145.8	118.2	113.8
1989	124.0	4.8	111.7	2.9	121.6	4.9	122.3	3.8	123.0	96.3	149.3	154.4	124.9	117.2
1st half 1988	116.8		108.4		114.4		117.0		117.2	95.8	136.5	143.0	116.5	113.5
1st half 1989	122.7	5.1	110.9	2.3	120.4	5.2	121.4	3.8	121.7	95.8	146.3	153.1	123.6	116.4
1st half 1990	128.7	4.9	116.9	5.4	126.2	4.8	126.5	4.2	126.8	102.2	159.1	160.1	131.0	122.5

Notes: The most current Consumer Price Index data available for Alaska is for the first half of 1990.
For comparability, data for the first half of 1988 and 1989 are given to show the percentage change over the year.

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

often used to adjust rents, wages or some other monetary payment for the effects of inflation. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is the only survey designed to answer such questions.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics produces the CPI in various metropolitan areas throughout the country. In Alaska, only Anchorage is surveyed. The shortcoming of having only Anchorage prices tracked is that while price trends in Anchorage reflect changes in the cost of living for many Alaskans, the results might not be appropriate in rural or even far removed urban areas of the state.

Table 1 and Figure 1 show Anchorage CPI data for various commodities over time. Returning to the concept of the market basket, items can be aggregated into commodity groups, such as food and beverages, housing, transportation, and health care. By analyzing the differences among groups, one can see which costs are rising at rates different from the overall CPI. For example, Figure 1 shows how medical costs have increased at a much more rapid rate than has the overall Anchorage CPI, while housing costs have lagged behind.

Housing Component Kept Anchorage Inflation Low Until Recently

Each commodity group is given a weight — its contribution to the overall cost of living. While health care costs have shot up in recent years, they account for only about 5% of the total cost of living. Housing costs, on the other hand, account for over 40% of the Anchorage CPI.

The strong influence that housing costs have on the overall Anchorage CPI has been particularly noticeable the last several years. (See Table 1, All Items Less Shelter and Housing Components.) Falling home and rental costs nearly offset increases in the other components of the CPI, so that the overall CPI rose only slightly. The recent increase in inflation in Anchorage can be partly accounted for by the improved housing market. With housing prices now in-

creasing, the Anchorage CPI is showing a much higher rate of inflation than previously.

The housing cost component is unique in the CPI, in that it is one of the few durable goods priced. Other than automobiles, other items in the CPI are nondurables, or items generally consumed within a short time frame ranging from food (several days to a few weeks) to clothing (several months to a few years). The CPI data assumes a consumer has just purchased or rented a home. To gauge the change in prices, this seems a logical assumption. However, to get a true picture of the changes in costs a family faces, it might be inappropriate to assume rental agreements or mortgages are renegotiated every few months. For this reason, the overall CPI figures have understated the rate of inflation in Anchorage for many people during the past several years.

CPI Measures Inflation- Not Living Costs Between Locations

CPI users should be aware of a common misinterpretation of the CPI index. It most often occurs when users compare CPI numbers among areas. For example, the annual average Anchorage CPI for 1989 of 111.7 is lower than the United States' average of 124. This does not, however, mean that Anchorage has a lower cost of living than the average in the United States. The CPI measures inflation, and not costs. The fact that the Anchorage CPI number in 1989 is smaller than the overall U.S. index does not mean that Anchorage costs are lower, only that Anchorage prices have not inflated as quickly as elsewhere in the U.S. since the base period. (In this case the base period, or when the two indexes equaled 100, is 1982-84)

Costs could have actually risen by a greater amount, in dollar terms, in Anchorage and still be below the U.S. inflation rate. For example, if a product costs, on average, $5.00 in the U.S. but $10.00 in Anchorage, a 10% inflation rate would increase the price by 50 cents in the U.S. but by $1.00 in Anchorage.

Table 2

Cost of Food for a Week in Various Alaskan Communities March 1990

Community	Cost of Food, 1 Week	Ratio of Food Cost to Anchorage Average (percent)
Anchorage	$100.73	n/a
Bethel	150.74	150%
Cordova	139.39	138
Delta	129.89	129
Dillingham	167.50	166
Elim	177.75	176
Fairbanks	107.66	107
Homer	121.27	120
Juneau	100.22	99
Kenai	107.67	107
Ketchikan	94.70	94
Kodiak	126.33	125
MatSu [v]	104.01	103
McGrath	147.87	147
Nome	150.65	150
Petersburg	113.41	113
St. Paul	142.14	141
Sand Point	143.84	143
Sitka	112.51	112
Tok	129.01	128

Costs are for a family of four with elementary school children.

[v] Mat-Su area's 2% tax is the rate for Palmer and is not used in tabulating costs.

Sales tax included in food and utility cost

Source: "Cost of Food at Home for a Week," March 1990
University of Alaska Cooperative Extension Service
U.S. Dept. of Agriculture and SEA Grant Cooperating.

Place-to-Place Comparisons of Costs

There are several different indices which compare living costs between places. All of these cost of living indices have their strengths (and weaknesses), with some being more appropriate than others in certain circumstances. For example, some are not a comprehensive cost of living index, but focus on one specific part of the cost of living. An example of this type of survey is the Cost of Food at Home for a Week survey, done quarterly by the University of Alaska's Cooperative Extension Service.

Cost of Food at Home

The Cost of Food study measures the cost to feed various size families in different locations in Alaska. The report also contains comparative information on some utility and fuel costs. The Cost of Food at Home survey is not a comprehensive measure of the cost of living for communities in Alaska. The survey only compares food costs in various Alaska communities. One of its strengths is its wide geographic coverage. It provides comparative measures for locations not covered by any other cost index.

Comparing the cost of living between communities in Alaska is made difficult

Table 3

Cost of Food at Home for a Week 1978-1990

Month/Year	Anchorage	Fairbanks	Percent of Anchorage Average	Juneau	Percent of Anchorage Average	Bethel	Percent of Anchorage Average
9/78	$76.67	$84.15	109.8	$73.72	96.2	$114.05	148.8
12/79	85.80	91.92	107.1	77.55	90.4	120.44	140.4
9/80	88.44	90.54	102.4	85.92	97.2	130.87	148.0
9/81	86.69	98.47	113.6	93.95	108.4	138.66	159.9
9/82	77.30	92.09	119.1	99.98	129.3	125.50	162.4
9/83	81.66	83.79	102.6	88.62	108.5	128.30	157.1
9/84	84.22	91.26	108.4	91.66	108.8	136.54	162.1
9/85	89.06	90.08	101.1	106.61	119.7	138.13	155.1
9/86	87.25	90.61	103.9	87.65	100.5	137.96	158.1
9/87	88.90	85.12	95.7	88.24	99.3	140.81	158.4
9/88	90.99	94.74	104.1	92.95	102.2	137.57	151.2
9/89	93.80	94.33	100.6	96.73	103.1	140.65	149.9
3/90	100.73	107.66	106.9	100.22	99.5	150.74	149.6

Family of four with elementary school children. Sales tax included in food prices

- Data unavailable

Source: "Cost of Food at Home for a Week," September 1978 to March 1990
University of Alaska Cooperative Extension Service
U.S. Dept. of Agriculture and SEA Grant Cooperating.

(cont. on page 5)

by several factors. Many goods and services available in larger cities are not readily available in some rural areas. The buying habits of urban residents vary from people in rural communities. Different consumption patterns in urban and rural areas complicate comparisons in the cost of living. Subsistence contributions to some households also make cost of living comparisons more difficult. The Cost of Food survey assumes that all goods are purchased in the local community — none are acquired through subsistence means or from merchants outside of the community.

Food Costs Are Higher in Rural Alaska

Table 2 shows the cost of food for a week for a family of four with elementary school children for 20 Alaska communities. The March 1990 figures show that Anchorage has the lowest costs of the areas surveyed. The larger cities in Alaska have food costs which are fairly comparable to those in Anchorage.

The Cost of Food survey has consistently shown that the most expensive cities are the smaller and more isolated communities. This continues to be true. In places such as Bethel, and Dillingham the costs are 50 to 70% higher than in Anchorage.

The Cost of Food study shows an interesting contrast between Alaska and other areas of the United States. In the lower 48, larger urban areas have higher costs for food and other goods and services than less populated areas. In rural areas of the nation the cost of living is typically less than in larger urban centers. The opposite is true for Alaska. The more rural Alaskan communities have costs for food and other basics, such as fuel, which are much greater than in the state's urban centers.

Table 3 is a time series of costs for the last 13 years. This table shows the difference in the cost of food between Anchorage and other Alaskan communities. It also shows the changes in costs over time within each community in the study.

ACCRA Cost of Living Index

Another place-to-place cost of living measure is provided by the American Chamber of Commerce Researchers Association (ACCRA). The ACCRA cost of living study compares costs for roughly 290 cities in the United States. The ACCRA study can be used to compare some costs among a few of Alaska's cities and other cities across the nation. In the ACCRA study, a standardized list of 59 items is priced during a fixed period of time. The items priced are intended to reflect the spending patterns of a mid-management household.

Although state and local taxes are certainly a part of the actual cost of living, the ACCRA index does not take them into account. Because of the limited number of items priced, differences in the ACCRA cost of living index less than three (such as 129 vs. 131) are statistically insignificant. A difference in the index greater than three can be considered to show a cost of living difference.

Table 3
(cont. from page 4)

Cost of Food at Home for a Week 1978-1990

Month/ Year	Nome	Percent of Anchorage Average	Kodiak	Percent of Anchorage Average	Kenai	Percent of Anchorage Average	Tok	Percent of Anchorage Average
9/78	$118.85	155.0	-	-	$82.48	107.6	-	-
12/79	124.62	145.2	-	-	100.41	117.0	-	-
9/80	131.14	148.3	$99.42	112.4	120.84	136.6	$108.82	123.0
9/81	150.27	173.3	-	-	-	-	114.80	132.4
9/82	149.04	192.8	-	-	-	-	-	-
9/83	130.14	159.4	104.94	128.5	86.98	106.5	-	-
9/84	142.07	168.7	115.97	137.7	87.97	104.5	121.66	144.5
9/85	152.41	171.1	108.17	121.5	91.47	102.7	116.19	130.5
9/86	142.04	162.8	105.49	120.9	92.78	106.3	124.18	142.3
9/87	147.96	166.4	104.39	117.4	96.95	109.1	117.51	132.2
9/88	147.69	162.3	116.68	128.2	95.53	105.0	119.69	131.5
9/89	-	-	124.61	132.8	104.20	111.1	139.43	148.6
3/90	150.65	149.6	126.33	125.4	107.67	106.9	129.01	128.1

ACCRA Index Places 4 Alaskan Cities Among Most Expensive

Five Alaskan cities participate in the quarterly ACCRA study — Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, Ketchikan, and Kodiak. The latest published numbers (1st Quarter 1990) show that four of Alaska's cities are among the 10 highest cost areas studied. (See Table 4.) Anchorage has the lowest index of the Alaska cities in the ACCRA study. According to the index Anchorage has a cost of living roughly 27% higher than the all cities' average. Some cities known to have a high cost of living, such as Boston, New York, and Washington D.C. are not included in the current data.

The Alaska cities in the ACCRA study have the highest costs for several of the six major components of the ACCRA index. (See Table 4.) For example, Ketchikan was tops for transportation, health care, and miscellaneous. Alaska's cities had the highest index num... for groceries and health care.

ACCRA Points to a Smaller Difference in Housing Costs

Housing costs have always been thought of as exceptionally high in Alaska. Although they may be high, the ACCRA housing index shows that some areas in the nation have comparable housing costs. Generally the lowest rankings for Alaska's cities were in the ACCRA housing cost index. The Anchorage utilities index was lower than about one-half of the cities in the ACCRA study.

Comparative figures for Alaskan cities and other cities around the nation are presented in Tables 5 and 6. Table 5 shows the ACCRA cost of living indexes while Table 6 contains prices for some of the goods and services in the ACCRA study.

The ACCRA cost of living study is designed around spending patterns found in major American urban centers. The data collected in the pricing survey is an attempt to match the items found in the larger areas. This process tends to ignore living costs found in atypical areas.

Table 4

ACCRA Cost of Living Index
First Quarter 1990
Ranking of 20 Highest Index Cities

City	Total Index	Grocery	Housing	Util.	Transp.	Health	Misc.
Nassau-Suffolk, NY	159.3	118.2	237.0	219.1	128.1	137.2	122.3
KODIAK, AK *	148.3	143.5	167.0	191.7	113.0	181.2	129.1
KETCHIKAN, AK	147.9	137.5	153.2	145.8	137.6	202.5	142.3
New London, CT	137.5	117.5	210.5	126.3	114.1	129.8	111.5
San Diego, CA	132.8	104.7	216.1	74.2	134.6	132.3	108.4
JUNEAU, AK	132.8	126.2	128.6	163.9	121.0	193.6	119.3
Orange County, CA	130.7	103.3	226.7	73.5	104.7	133.1	107.5
Hartford, CT	130.1	116.2	161.4	124.0	114.2	141.1	121.7
San Jose, CA	129.3	106.4	218.6	84.0	105.8	135.1	102.3
FAIRBANKS, AK	128.2	126.0	104.9	139.7	130.2	187.8	127.7
Ventura County, CA	127.9	103.3	225.8	66.8	101.9	123.4	104.9
Philadelphia, PA	127.5	114.9	139.9	171.6	108.9	136.7	115.4
Los Angeles County, CA	127.4	103.3	211.3	75.6	102.1	128.5	109.2
ANCHORAGE, AK	127.3	129.3	126.0	94.6	118.4	186.5	129.2
Meriden, CT	126.9	107.4	181.2	103.6	102.1	123.0	118.3
Manchester, NH	120.8	102.0	155.5	140.8	107.4	114.7	105.8
Palm Springs, CA	120.3	103.6	158.0	91.6	114.7	129.0	113.1
Montpelier-Barre, VT	119.0	105.8	147.8	161.7	104.3	98.9	100.8
Temecula, CA	118.0	98.8	159.5	100.4	106.3	125.6	107.6
Wilmington, DE	117.4	104.1	125.1	139.2	98.8	122.3	118.2
Ranking of Alaska Cities by Category							
Anchorage, AK	14	3	27	173	7	5	2
Fairbanks, AK	10	5	83	7	3	4	4
Juneau, AK	6	4	25	4	6	3	6
Ketchikan, AK	3	2	14	5	1	1	1
Kodiak, AK	2	1	9	2	14	2	3

Source: Cost of Living Index (291 Cities) 1st Quarter 1990, American Chamber of Commerce Researchers Association.

* Kodiak data 4th Quarter 1989, and is not comparable to 1st Quarter 1990 data.

For example the transportation costs in the ACCRA study include items such as bus fare, the price of a gallon of gasoline, and automobile wheel balancing.

For many areas in Alaska, such as Juneau, Ketchikan, and Kodiak, a typical living cost may include expensive transportation just to leave town. Air fare, which may be a luxury or just one option for travel elsewhere, is an essential in many areas of Alaska. This example illustrates how the ACCRA index might understate the differences between some of Alaska's cities and the all cities' average.

The Runzheimer Living Cost Index

A slightly different approach to calculating the differences among cities is taken in a study commissioned by the Alaska Department of Labor. Runzheimer International, a private research firm, looked at the comparative incomes necessary to maintain a certain standard of living in 253 different areas of the country. This income approach takes into account certain elements often left out of other cost of living measures, such as an area's tax rates.

For this study, a "base" family was created — two parents, two children, living in a 1,500 square foot home with 3 bedrooms and 1.5 baths, driving two automobiles. This family had an income of $32,000 in Standard City, a fictitious city which had costs close to the median of all the cities in the survey. The standard of living attainable in Standard City was then priced in each of the surveyed areas.

The most recent Runzheimer survey, using October 1989 data, shows Alaska's cities to have quite moderate costs com-

Table 5

ACCRA Cost of Living Index
First Quarter 1990

City	All Items Index	Grocery Items	Housing	Utilities	Trans-portation	Health Care	Misc. Goods & Services
West							
ANCHORAGE, AK	127.3	129.3	126.0	94.6	118.4	186.5	129.2
FAIRBANKS, AK	128.2	126.0	104.9	139.7	130.2	187.8	127.7
JUNEAU, AK	132.8	126.2	128.6	163.9	121.0	193.6	119.3
KETCHIKAN, AK	147.9	137.5	153.2	145.8	137.6	202.5	142.3
KODIAK, AK *	148.3	143.5	167.0	191.7	113.0	181.2	129.1
Salt Lake City, UT	92.9	90.0	82.3	86.4	95.2	95.0	103.3
San Diego, CA	132.8	104.7	216.1	74.2	134.6	132.3	108.4
Seattle, WA	113.2	110.4	137.7	64.0	117.6	136.5	107.6
Southwest							
Albuquerque, NM	99.1	96.3	105.2	98.8	100.9	102.1	95.0
Dallas, TX	103.1	105.4	98.9	108.9	110.0	106.8	98.8
Phoenix, AZ	101.1	95.7	98.7	96.3	104.6	115.2	102.9
Midwest							
Minneapolis, MN	102.9	92.8	112.3	105.2	106.0	107.5	98.6
Omaha, NE	91.2	93.1	85.6	90.4	102.3	83.8	91.5
Saint Louis, MO	98.2	94.7	97.3	111.1	98.6	97.3	96.1
Southeast							
Augusta, GA	99.3	96.2	88.8	115.6	102.3	94.0	102.6
Montgomery, AL	99.3	97.2	88.8	115.2	95.9	105.4	102.5
Louisville, KY	93.1	94.6	91.0	79.4	102.4	88.4	95.9
Atlantic/New England							
Baltimore, MD	111.4	106.0	114.1	108.1	112.8	111.5	112.9
Philadelphia, PA	127.5	114.9	139.9	171.6	108.9	136.7	115.4
Wilmington, DE	117.4	104.1	125.1	139.2	98.8	122.3	118.2

Source: Cost of Living Index (291 Cities) 1st Quarter 1990, American Chamber of Commerce Researchers Association.

* Kodiak data from 4th Quarter 1989, and is not comparable to 1st Quarter 1990 data.

pared to the other areas surveyed. In this survey, costs were only 2.9% to 5.9% above Standard City. (See Table 7.)

One assumption critical to the results of the survey was the duration of home ownership. Like the Consumer Price Index and ACCRA surveys, the guidelines in the Runzheimer survey assume a recent home purchase. The volatility of the Alaska housing market greatly impacted the cost of housing in the results. Mortgage payments accounted for 25% of the family's total living costs in Standard City. Anchorage was only slightly higher than 25%, while Juneau and Fairbanks were between 20% and 25% of total living costs going towards mortgage payments.

Several years ago, when Alaska's real estate prices were at their highest, a larger share of total income went towards housing costs. Some of the higher cost areas of the country see the greatest difference in the housing cost component — in Los Angeles over 40% of total living costs go towards mortgage payments. Those persons who bought a home several years ago are paying off higher mortgages than those reported in the Runzheimer report. As Alaska's housing market recovers, mortgage costs will again rise, increasing total living costs.

Summary — Assess Your Needs and Be Aware of Index Limitations

The first question one must answer when looking for cost of living information is what type of comparison needs to be made. Is one interested in how costs changed over time, or how costs differ between places? Answering this ques-

Table 6

ACCRA Cost of Living Index
Cost of Select Items in Select Cities
First Quarter 1989

City	1 lb Ground Beef	1/2 gal Whole Milk	1 lb Coffee	House Purchase Price	Total Energy Cost	1 gal Gas	Hospital Room	Office Visit Doctor
West								
ANCHORAGE, AK	$1.69	$2.01	$3.59	$123,785	$106.58	$1.10	$452.50	$60.00
FAIRBANKS, AK	1.79	1.97	3.45	99,333	160.14	1.22	326.00	53.80
JUNEAU, AK	1.67	1.84	3.25	125,000	185.22	1.45	380.00	43.80
KETCHIKAN, AK	1.66	2.04	3.63	156,000	173.32	1.45	425.00	56.50
KODIAK, AK *	1.76	1.96	3.46	157,500	218.77	1.41	312.00	41.60
Salt Lake City, UT	1.01	1.43	2.79	83,640	93.83	0.93	268.20	26.00
San Diego, CA	1.65	1.26	2.47	227,000	80.51	1.07	419.00	39.40
Seattle, WA	1.62	1.33	3.02	143,329	65.70	0.92	309.85	41.00
Southwest								
Albuquerque, NM	1.35	1.49	2.57	107,398	105.46	1.03	273.00	31.00
Dallas, TX	1.62	1.66	2.07	95,698	120.26	0.94	270.43	35.28
Phoenix, AZ	1.28	1.20	2.07	95,823	106.70	1.03	298.38	34.50
Midwest								
Minneapolis, MN	1.10	1.36	2.51	117,470	115.23	1.09	339.00	29.40
Omaha, NE	1.44	1.21	2.25	86,940	95.85	0.99	206.40	29.20
Saint Louis, MO	1.39	1.32	2.77	98,765	123.23	0.92	250.60	33.70
Southeast								
Augusta, GA	1.69	1.50	2.01	94,400	127.98	0.98	237.50	30.60
Montgomery, AL	1.64	1.67	2.53	90,000	125.49	1.03	223.50	39.40
Louisville, KY	1.67	1.38	2.37	88,130	80.11	1.03	287.68	27.00
Atlantic/New England								
Baltimore, MD	1.43	1.39	2.71	123,154	116.20	1.06	312.40	31.20
Wilmington, DE	1.69	1.22	2.51	134,751	158.16	0.95	371.33	30.40
Philadelphia, PA	1.51	1.10	2.99	141,800	199.14	1.04	420.40	44.20
ALL CITIES MEAN	1.51	1.41	2.54	104,108	109.06	1.04	256.09	30.10

All cities mean is the mean price of all 291 cities in the 1st quarter 1990 survey.

Source: Inter-City Cost of Living Index.(291 Cities) 1st Quarter 1990, American Chamber of Commerce Researchers Association.

* Kodiak data 4th Quarter 1989, and is not strictly comparable to 1st Quarter 1990 data.

tion narrows the field of appropriate cost of living surveys.

Next a decision must be made on the suitability of different surveys — some surveys look at part of the total cost of living package, such as the Cost of Food at Home survey. Some surveys might look at a population unlike the one being studied. The ACCRA surveys might not reflect the cost of living for poverty income level families, because it emulates a midmanagement families' spending patterns

In Alaska, particularly in smaller communities, survey choices are few. Only the Cost of Food at Home and the ACCRA Cost of Living Index include more than the three largest Alaska cities. These surveys have certain limitations in the scope of goods priced. For this reason, a data user might be forced to use an index which only approximates cost of living differences.

Given these limitations, most cost of living questions involve some sort of compromise answer. Still, the indexes mentioned in this article provide information to help answer these questions. When used with proper care, the information can help you compare how far your dollar will go.

Table 7

Runzheimer International Living Cost Standards
October 1989

City	Total Costs	Percent of Standard City	Trans-portation	Percent of Standard City	Housing	Percent of Standard City	Misc. Goods & Services, Other	Percent of Standard City
Anchorage	$33,886	105.9%	$4,476	116.8%	$13,914	110.4%	$10,727	107.7%
Fairbanks	32,939	102.9	4,422	115.4	12,462	98.8	10,949	109.9
Juneau	33,343	104.2	4,268	111.3	12,835	101.8	11,260	113.0
STANDARD CITY	32,000	—	3,833	—	12,607	—	9,961	—
Albuquerque	31,174	97.4	3,756	98.0	12,163	96.5	9,872	99.1
Atlanta	32,957	103.0	4,193	109.4	12,889	102.2	10,227	102.7
Augusta	32,614	101.9	3,672	95.8	14,157	112.3	9,775	98.1
Birmingham	29,871	93.3	3,615	94.3	10,054	79.7	9,970	100.1
Boston	41,681	130.3	4,678	122.0	22,149	175.7	9,887	99.3
Chicago	36,386	113.7	4,194	109.4	16,459	130.6	10,630	106.7
Dallas	30,959	96.7	4,178	109.0	11,360	90.1	10,307	103.5
Denver	30,898	96.6	4,158	108.5	11,438	90.7	9,554	95.9
Detroit	34,394	107.5	4,323	112.8	14,942	118.5	9,891	99.3
Honolulu	39,658	123.9	4,790	125.0	18,311	145.2	12,230	122.8
Indianapolis	30,784	96.2	3,879	101.2	11,033	87.5	9,708	97.5
Jacksonville	30,531	95.4	3,931	102.6	11,290	89.6	10,232	102.7
Los Angeles	41,748	130.5	5,386	140.5	22,235	176.4	10,356	104.0
Milwaukee	32,556	101.7	3,713	96.9	13,228	104.9	9,698	97.4
New York City	44,359	138.6	6,584	171.8	22,986	182.3	10,719	107.6
Philadelphia	37,559	117.4	4,891	127.6	16,322	129.5	10,165	102.0
Portland	32,197	100.6	4,029	105.1	12,555	99.6	9,590	96.3
San Francisco	48,025	150.1	5,067	132.2	29,505	234.0	10,635	106.8
Seattle	33,254	103.9	4,183	109.1	13,992	111.0	10,453	104.9
St. Louis	32,270	100.8	3,785	98.7	12,674	100.5	9,938	99.8
Washington, D.C.	39,176	122.4	4,303	112.3	19,845	157.4	10,509	105.5

Source: Runzheimer's Living Cost Index, October, 1989.

Summary of Cost of Living Indexes

Survey	Population	Strength	Weakness
Consumer Price Index	All urban consumers(CPI-U) or urban wage and clerical workers (CPI-W).	Measures costs in one location over time; the only available inflation measure.	Can only compare the change in the cost-of-living for different locations; only available for Anchorage.
ACCRA Cost of Living Index	Midmanagement level family.	Compares many locations to a national average.	No tracking of changes over time; lacks consistency in price collection.
Cost of Food at Home Study	Lower income individuals or families.	Compares minimum food costs for smaller Alaskan communities excluded from other studies.	No good comparison of national data; only looks at food costs, not entire cost of living.
Runzheimer's Living Cost Index	Family with $32,000 in income, living in average cost city.	Considers income needed to maintain a specific standard of living in different cities; includes taxes.	Does not directly address differences in prices.

Employment Climbs To Record Highs In 1990

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by Neal Fried

If we measure Alaska's economy by the number of wage and salary jobs available, then it is fair to say the economy reached a new milestone in 1990. Since February, Alaska's wage and salary employment climbed above the previous 1985 highs and July was no exception. (See Figure 1.) Not only has Alaska's employment recovered the ground lost during the last recession (20,600 jobs) but it has also gained some. In hindsight, and from an employment standpoint, it can now be said the recession ended in 1988 and the economy fully recovered in 1990.

Some Regions Are Recovering More Than Others

The Northern, Gulf Coast, Southwest, and Southeast regions of the state have more employment than they did in 1985. These regions experienced small or no employment declines during the post-1985 recession. The oil revenue declines did not affect their primary basic industries such as timber and fishing.

The Northern region's story is altogether different. Declines in this region's oil and construction industries led to sharp employment declines. The construction industry has not recovered to it's previous peak, but oil industry employment reached new highs in 1990. In addition to the oil industry recovery, hard rock mining has breathed new life into the region. Employment in this industry is now five times what it was in 1985. Gold mining in the Nome region has grown substantially, and the Red Dog lead and zinc mine, employing as many as 300 people, began to operate in late 1989.

The Railbelt — Anchorage, Fairbanks, and the communities in between — along with part of the Kenai Peninsula and a few other areas, have yet to reach their pre-recessionary employment highs of 1985 but they are all well on their way.

Table 1

Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment By Place of Work — Alaska

	p/ 7/90	r/ 6/90	7/89	Changes from: 6/90	7/89
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	251,500	245,000	249,000	6,500	2,500
Goods-producing	50,800	44,100	48,300	6,700	2,500
Mining	11,600	11,400	10,500	200	1,100
Construction	13,200	12,600	12,500	600	700
Manufacturing	26,000	20,100	25,300	5,900	700
Durable Goods	4,600	4,600	4,500	0	100
Lumber & Wood Products	3,600	3,600	3,600	0	0
Nondurable Goods	21,400	15,500	20,800	5,900	600
Seafood Processing	17,500	11,600	17,000	5,900	500
Pulp Mills	900	900	1,000	0	-100
Service-producing	200,700	200,900	200,700	-200	0
Transportation	21,100	20,900	26,000	200	-4,900
Trucking & Warehousing	2,600	2,600	2,600	0	0
Water Transportation	1,400	1,400	1,700	0	-300
Air Transportation	7,000	6,900	6,700	100	300
Communications	3,300	3,300	3,300	0	0
Trade	48,800	48,100	47,500	700	1,300
Wholesale Trade	9,000	8,700	8,700	300	300
Retail Trade	39,800	39,400	38,800	400	1,000
Gen. Merch. & Apparel	5,700	5,500	5,600	200	100
Food Stores	7,200	7,200	6,600	0	600
Eating & Drinking Places	14,500	14,500	14,300	0	200
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	10,900	10,900	10,600	0	300
Services & Misc.	51,700	51,000	50,600	700	1,100
Hotels & Lodging Places	6,700	6,500	6,500	200	200
Government	68,200	70,000	66,000	-1,800	2,200
Federal	19,400	19,500	19,000	-100	400
State	21,200	21,000	20,300	200	900
Local	27,600	29,500	26,700	-1,900	900

Notes: Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Government includes teachers in primary and secondary schools, and personnel employed by the University of Alaska.

The employment numbers that appear above are definitionally different from those that appear in the Labor Force table.

Benchmark date: March 1989

p/ denotes preliminary estimates r/ denotes revised estimates

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

Most industries in these areas have reached 1985 levels. Fewer jobs in a couple of industries are preventing total employment from achieving an overall recovery; the construction industry is the number one culprit.

Construction, Finance Sectors Still Lag

Although total industry employment statewide has reached a new high, the construction work force is half its pre-recessionary size. (See Figure 2.) Given this fact, and the fact that nearly half of the construction employment was located in Anchorage, it is not surprising that Anchorage's total employment has not yet reached its 1985 peak. Total construction valuation in Anchorage will do well to hit $150 million in 1990 — a long way from the $1+ billion valuation of 1983. The picture in Fairbanks and other railbelt communities is not much different. Fairbanks construction employment is slightly over half the size it was in 1985.

The other industry that is a long way from full recovery is the finance-insurance and real estate sector. It began recovering this year but is still a long way from recouping its losses. A dozen financial institutions closed their doors and few new ones have entered the market to fill this vacuum. These losses particularly hurt Anchorage, headquarters for many of these institutions.

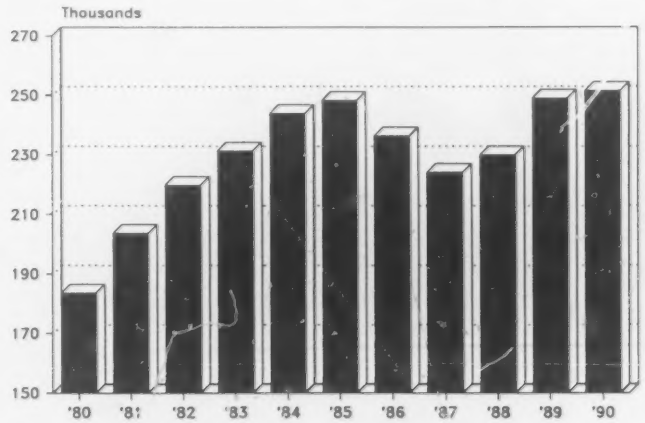
July's Unemployment Rate A Strong Indicator Of Recovery

The state's unemployment rate of 5.3% in July was another bit of welcome news for Alaska's economy. (See Table 4.) Although this rate is slightly higher than last year's, it is one of the lowest on record for July. July's rate was lower than the national average — an unusual occurrence. (See Figure 3.)

Alaska's low unemployment rate is a reflection of both the relatively robust Alaska economy and the national job market. The healthy labor market elsewhere, particularly in the western states, has meant fewer job seekers coming to Alaska during this recovery than during previous ones.

Figure 1

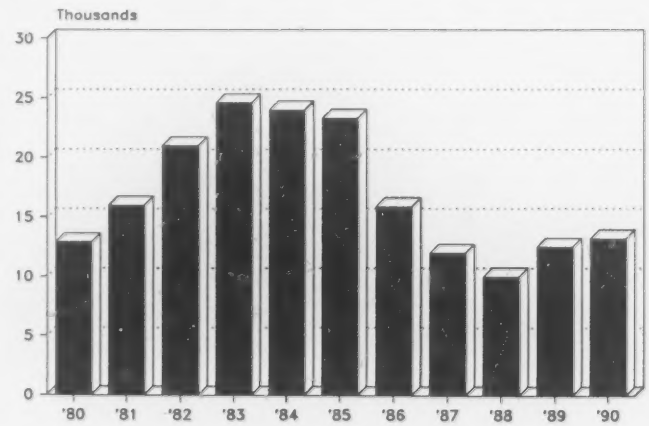
Alaska's Economy Recovers — July Employment, 1980-1990



Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

Figure 2

Alaska's July Construction Employment, 1980-1990



Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

Table 2

Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment By Place of Work

Municipality of Anchorage

	p/ 7/90	r/ 6/90	7/89	Changes from: 6/90	7/89
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	112,300	111,950	108,150	350	4,150
Goods-producing	13,450	12,750	12,400	700	1,050
Mining	3,800	3,850	3,450	-50	350
Construction	6,700	6,250	6,200	450	500
Manufacturing	2,950	2,650	2,750	300	200
Service-producing	98,850	99,200	95,750	-350	3,100
Transportation	11,100	10,950	10,900	150	200
Trucking & Warehousing	1,550	1,550	1,500	0	50
Water Transportation	300	300	350	0	-50
Air Transportation	4,350	4,250	4,150	100	200
Communications	2,000	1,900	1,850	100	150
Trade	26,750	26,700	25,750	50	1,000
Wholesale Trade	6,400	6,350	6,150	50	250
Retail Trade	20,350	20,350	19,600	0	750
Gen. Merch. & Apparel	2,700	2,750	2,750	-50	-50
Food Stores	3,250	3,300	3,000	-50	250
Eating & Drinking Places	8,000	7,900	7,900	100	100
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	6,950	6,900	6,750	50	200
Services & Misc.	27,950	28,200	27,450	-250	500
Hotels & Lodging Places	2,650	2,550	2,550	100	100
Government	26,100	26,450	24,900	-350	1,200
Federal	10,350	10,500	10,150	-150	200
State	7,250	7,350	6,750	-100	500
Local	8,500	8,600	8,000	-100	500

Fairbanks North Star Borough

	p/ 7/90	r/ 6/90	7/89	Changes from: 6/90	7/89
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	28,850	28,700	28,300	150	550
Goods-producing	2,900	2,850	2,800	50	100
Mining	200	200	200	0	0
Construction	2,100	2,050	2,000	50	100
Manufacturing	600	600	600	0	0
Service-producing	25,950	25,850	25,500	100	450
Transportation	2,200	2,200	2,100	0	100
Trucking & Warehousing	550	550	450	0	100
Air Transportation	400	400	400	0	0
Communications	200	250	250	-50	-50
Trade	6,600	6,650	6,500	-50	100
Wholesale Trade	800	750	750	50	50
Retail Trade	5,800	5,900	5,750	-100	50
Gen. Merch. & Apparel	650	650	750	0	-100
Food Stores	850	850	800	0	50
Eating & Drinking Places	2,400	2,550	2,350	-150	50
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	950	950	900	0	50
Services & Misc.	6,550	6,350	6,500	200	50
Government	9,650	9,700	9,500	-50	150
Federal	3,300	3,300	3,250	0	50
State	4,000	3,950	3,900	50	100
Local	2,350	2,450	2,350	-100	0

Anchorage-MatSu Region

	p/ 7/90	r/ 6/90	7/89	Changes from: 6/90	7/89
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	119,550	118,850	115,350	700	4,200
Goods-producing	13,850	13,100	13,050	750	800
Mining	3,800	3,850	3,650	-50	150
Construction	6,950	6,500	6,450	450	500
Manufacturing	3,100	2,750	2,950	350	150
Service-producing	105,700	105,750	102,300	-50	3,400
Transportation	11,750	11,550	11,450	200	300
Trade	28,700	28,600	27,700	100	1,000
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	7,350	7,400	7,200	-50	150
Services & Misc.	29,550	29,600	28,850	-50	700
Government	28,350	28,600	27,100	-250	1,250
Federal	10,500	10,650	10,250	-150	250
State	8,000	8,100	7,600	-100	400
Local	9,850	9,850	9,250	0	600

Interior Region

	p/ 7/90	r/ 6/90	7/89	Changes from: 6/90	7/89
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	33,550	33,300	32,750	250	800
Goods-producing	3,300	3,250	3,100	50	200
Mining	400	400	350	0	50
Construction	2,250	2,200	2,100	50	150
Manufacturing	650	650	650	0	0
Service-producing	30,250	30,050	29,650	200	600
Transportation	2,500	2,500	2,450	0	50
Trade	7,100	7,200	7,000	-100	100
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	1,000	1,050	1,000	-50	0
Services	7,350	7,050	7,250	300	100
Government	12,300	12,250	11,950	50	350
Federal	4,100	4,100	4,000	0	100
State	4,650	4,350	4,350	300	300
Local	3,550	3,800	3,600	-250	-50

Notes: Government includes teachers in primary and secondary schools, and personnel employed by the University of Alaska.

The employment numbers that appear above are definitionally different from those that appear in the Labor Force table.

Benchmark date: March 1989 p/ denotes preliminary estimates r/ denotes revised estimates

(cont. on page 13)

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment By Place of Work

Southeast Region

	p/ 7/90	r/ 6/90	Changes from: 7/89	6/90	7/89
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	36,850	35,500	35,500	1,350	1,350
Goods-producing	8,850	7,850	8,550	1,000	300
Mining	400	400	300	0	100
Construction	1,450	1,350	1,350	100	100
Manufacturing	7,000	6,100	6,900	900	100
Durable Goods	3,250	3,200	3,250	50	0
Lumber & Wood Products	3,050	3,050	3,100	0	-50
Nondurable Goods	3,750	2,900	3,650	850	100
Seafood Processing	2,600	1,800	2,500	800	100
Pulp Mills	950	950	1,000	0	-50
Service-producing	28,000	27,650	26,950	350	1,050
Transportation	2,750	2,700	2,750	50	0
Trade	6,000	5,800	5,800	200	200
Wholesale Trade	700	700	650	0	50
Retail Trade	5,300	5,100	5,150	200	150
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	1,150	1,100	1,100	50	50
Services & Misc.	5,700	5,650	5,600	50	100
Government	12,400	12,400	11,700	0	700
Federal	2,400	2,350	2,250	50	150
State	5,800	5,700	5,350	100	450
Local	4,200	4,350	4,100	-150	100

Gulf Coast Region

	p/ 7/90	r/ 6/90	Changes from: 7/89	6/90	7/89
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	28,000	25,500	32,700	2,500	-4,700
Goods-producing	10,250	7,400	9,950	2,850	300
Mining	850	850	850	0	0
Construction	1,350	1,350	1,400	0	-50
Manufacturing	8,050	5,200	7,700	2,850	350
Seafood Processing	6,900	4,100	6,650	2,800	250
Service-producing	17,750	18,100	22,750	-350	-5,000
Transportation	2,000	1,950	7,000	50	-5,000
Trade	4,400	4,350	4,450	50	-50
Wholesale Trade	700	650	700	50	0
Retail Trade	3,700	3,700	3,750	0	-50
Finance-Ins. & Real Estate	600	600	600	0	0
Services & Misc.	4,900	4,850	4,950	50	-50
Government	5,850	6,350	5,750	-500	100
Federal	700	700	600	0	100
State	1,900	1,900	2,000	0	-100
Local	3,250	3,750	3,150	-500	100

Northern Region

	p/ 7/90	r/ 6/90	Changes from: 7/89	6/90	7/89
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	15,350	15,250	14,000	100	1,350
Goods-producing	6,950	6,700	6,150	250	800
Mining	6,150	6,000	5,200	150	950
Service-producing	8,400	8,550	7,850	-150	550
Government	4,000	4,300	3,700	-300	300
Federal	300	300	300	0	0
State	350	350	300	0	50
Local	3,350	3,650	3,100	-300	250

Southwest Region

	p/ 7/90	r/ 6/90	Changes from: 7/89	6/90	7/89
Total Nonag. Wage & Salary	18,150	16,700	17,800	1,450	350
Goods-producing	7,700	5,900	7,600	1,800	100
Seafood Processing	7,100	5,350	7,050	1,750	50
Service-producing	10,450	10,800	10,200	-350	250
Government	5,450	6,100	5,300	-650	150
Federal	1,350	1,400	1,350	-50	0
State	550	550	550	0	0
Local	3,550	4,150	3,400	-600	150

Notes: Government includes teachers in primary and secondary schools, and personnel employed by the University of Alaska.

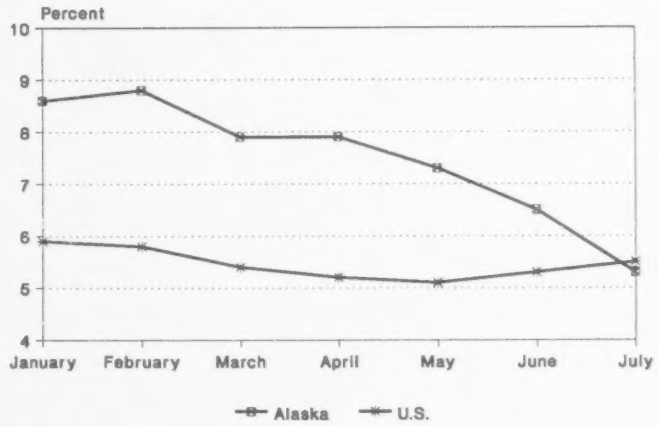
The employment numbers that appear above are definitionally different from those that appear in the Labor Force table.

Benchmark date: March 1989 p/ denotes preliminary estimates r/ denotes revised estimates

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

Figure 3

Unemployment Rates in 1990 — Alaska & U.S.



Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

Although Alaska's economy should remain healthy in the near future, the national job market appears to be softening. If this leads into a full-fledged national recession, as many analysts are predicting, Alaska could quickly be flooded by job seekers. This would bring an end to the low unemployment rates Alaska is presently enjoying.

Almost All Industries are Contributing

There is no single event or industry that is responsible for Alaska's healthy job market. Instead, nearly all sectors of the economy are contributing to this robust employment outlook. These include tourism, mining, trade, services, fishing and government. (See Table 1.)

Tourism Increased in 1990 Season

Except for the unknown affects last year's oil spill might have had on this year's tourism season, the ingredients for a good year were in place during 1990. These included promotional efforts, a strong national and international economy, solid national income growth and relatively low gasoline prices.

Tourism enjoyed a solid year, if preliminary reports can be taken at face value. Reliable and timely indicators are elusive in this industry but most tour operators, hotels, and national parks reported increases in 1990. Southeast Alaska enjoyed a particularly strong growth year. Approximately 61 more cruise ships docked this year in Juneau and hotel occupancy was up as much as 11% for some hotels there.

The in-state segment of the tourist trade also contributed to a better season. Alaskans have more income in 1990 and population is on the rise. More residents means more visitors, and increased income means they have more to spend. In some places a majority of their visitors come from elsewhere within the state.

There Are More Jobs in The Oil Industry

The number of oil field workers this year has been running about 800 above 1989 levels, and July was no exception. This growth comes largely as a result of the aging fields on the North Slope that now require more labor to squeeze oil out of the ground. More maintenance work is demanded along with new methods to pull the oil out of the ground. For example, the $450 million gas-handling project will boost Prudhoe Bay's production by 90,000 barrels a day. The modules for this facility left Portland, Oregon in July bound for Prudhoe Bay.

Retailers Are Optimistic

Strong seasonal and over the year growth in the retail trade and service sectors is coming from the tourism industry, an increasing population, and strong income growth in the state. Some retailers are optimistic enough to plan for new facilities — ground was broken this July in Fairbanks for a new Fred Meyer store, and the Carr's grocery chain recently announced plans for a new store in Fairbanks.

Forest Fires Boost Government Employment

This year, a natural disaster helped boost government numbers in the Interior region that are usually declining in July. (See Table 2.) Alaska experienced its biggest fire season since 1969; combined state and federal fire fighting crews peaked at over 2,700 in July. Although fighting fires in July is a perennial activity in Alaska, the sheer size of this year's fires pushed employment beyond anything seen in the recent past. Included in the 2,700 firefighters were all 73 of the 16-person emergency crews which come mostly from villages in rural Alaska. While total costs have not yet been tallied, these emergency crews earned $8.7 million in wages this season.

Census workers also boosted the federal sector's employment in July. Employees were out in the field doing quality control checks and follow up work. The number of census workers will dwindle to only a skeletal staff in August.

Salmon Bonanza In Bristol Bay Leads Good Harvest Statewide

The 1990 salmon season was better than average; as of late August it had not topped last year's record catch of 156 million fish, but it could reach 135 million. Prince William Sound enjoyed a record run of pinks in 1990. Bristol Bay, the state's largest fishery, had its second best season in history. Elsewhere in the state the picture was mixed — Lower Cook-Inlet, Kodiak and Yukon runs were weak and other fisheries were average to good. Although prices were projected to fall this year, they have either held steady or increased slightly.

Summary: Another Strong Summer For Employment In Alaska

During the six months ending in July the number of jobs in Alaska exceeded the previous historical employment high of 1985. Some would characterize this event as a sign of a full recovery of the Alaskan economy. However, the recovery is not spread equally throughout the state.

Those areas of the state with economies based on fish and timber have fared the best — the Southwest, Gulf Coast and Southeast regions. The Northern region has also surpassed its 1985 levels. Oil industry employment and the dramatic increase in hard rock mining has made the recovery possible.

Most of the employment growth in the railbelt communities over the past two years has not progressed enough to push above previous levels reached in 1985, although it is moving in that direction.

A healthy Alaskan and national economy kept the state's unemployment rates at near-record lows in July. Fewer jobs seekers from the lower 48 are coming to Alaska than during past recoveries, and the Alaskan economy is generating new opportunities for job seekers in the state. However, by the same time next year the state's unemployment picture may not be quite as rosy since a national recession may be eminent and competition for jobs would grow.

No one industry was responsible for the healthy job market in Alaska. Tourism enjoyed a respectable 1990 season. The salmon harvest did not match last year's record catch, but was better than average. Bristol Bay had its second largest catch and Prince William Sound enjoyed its largest pink salmon catch in history. The biggest fire season since 1969, along with ongoing census work, boosted government jobs in July.

All said, Alaska's summer season, the telltale time for the entire year, looked relatively prosperous. Most of the state's industries are growing and job seekers in turn are finding better than average employment opportunities.

Table 3

Alaska Hours and Earnings for Selected Industries [1/2]

	Average Weekly Earnings			Average Weekly Hours			Average Hourly Earnings		
	p/ 7/90	r/ 6/90	7/89	p/ 7/90	r/ 6/90	7/89	p/ 7/90	r/ 6/90	7/89
Mining	$1,160.34	$1,131.67	$1,069.21	49.8	48.8	48.8	$23.30	$23.19	$21.91
Construction	1,187.31	1,215.23	1,164.97	48.7	49.5	48.5	24.38	24.55	24.02
Manufacturing	575.02	575.87	512.62	52.9	44.4	46.9	10.87	12.97	10.93
Seafood Processing	516.78	448.00	437.36	58.0	44.4	49.7	8.91	10.09	8.80
Trans., Comm. & Utilities	626.44	611.25	869.30	36.4	35.6	48.7	17.21	17.17	17.85
Trade	430.25	410.74	408.44	36.4	35.5	36.5	11.82	11.57	11.19
Wholesale	600.62	572.32	554.71	38.9	39.2	38.9	15.44	14.60	14.26
Retail	370.27	355.69	358.79	35.5	34.3	35.7	10.43	10.37	10.05
Finance-Ins. & R.E	419.25	402.17	411.34	37.4	34.7	38.3	11.21	11.59	10.74

Notes: p/ denotes preliminary estimates r/ denotes revised estimates Benchmark: March 1989

1/ Prepared in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor.

2/ Retail Trade excludes eating and drinking establishments.

Averages are based on data for full- and part-time production workers (manufacturing) and nonsupervisory workers (nonmanufacturing) and are for gross earnings and hours paid, including overtime pay and hours.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

Table 4

Labor Force By Region and Census Area

	Labor Force			Unemployment			Rate			Employment		
	p/ 7/90	r/ 6/90	7/89	p/ 7/90	r/ 6/90	7/89	p/ 7/90	r/ 6/90	7/89	p/ 7/90	r/ 6/90	7/89
Alaska Statewide	270,163	262,600	264,276	14,241	17,179	12,980	5.3	6.5	4.9	255,922	245,421	251,296
Anch.-MatSu Region	134,574	132,288	128,369	6,627	7,628	5,889	4.9	5.8	4.6	127,947	124,660	122,480
Anchorage Borough	119,187	117,319	113,321	5,074	5,777	4,448	4.3	4.9	3.9	114,113	111,542	108,873
MatSu Borough	15,387	14,969	15,048	1,553	1,851	1,441	10.1	12.4	9.6	13,834	13,118	13,607
Gulf Coast Region	34,823	32,309	39,110	2,079	2,922	1,471	6.0	9.0	3.8	32,744	29,387	37,639
Kenai Peninsula Borough	21,504	19,987	24,180	1,441	1,981	1,118	6.7	9.9	4.6	20,063	18,006	23,062
Kodiak Island Borough	7,934	7,266	9,007	289	405	219	3.6	5.6	2.4	7,645	6,861	8,788
Valdez-Cordova	5,385	5,056	5,923	349	536	134	6.5	10.6	2.3	5,036	4,520	5,789
Interior Region	37,997	37,585	36,634	2,572	3,132	2,385	6.8	8.3	6.5	35,425	34,453	34,249
Fairbanks North Star Bor.	32,942	32,474	31,677	2,226	2,601	1,981	6.8	8.0	6.3	30,716	29,873	29,696
Southeast Fairbanks	2,063	2,099	2,015	100	190	117	4.8	9.1	5.8	1,963	1,909	1,898
Yukon-Koyukuk	2,992	3,012	2,942	246	341	287	8.2	11.3	9.8	2,746	2,671	2,655
Northern Region	8,572	8,676	7,804	701	837	678	8.2	9.6	8.7	7,871	7,839	7,126
Nome	3,143	3,173	2,955	264	306	348	8.4	9.6	11.8	2,879	2,867	2,607
North Slope Borough	3,090	3,097	2,834	113	132	139	3.7	4.3	4.9	2,977	2,965	2,695
Northwest Arctic Borough	2,339	2,406	2,015	324	399	191	13.9	16.6	9.5	2,015	2,007	1,824
Southeast Region	39,318	37,689	37,819	1,750	1,983	1,976	4.5	5.3	5.2	37,568	35,706	35,843
Haines Borough	937	898	913	44	49	61	4.7	5.5	6.7	893	849	852
Juneau Borough	17,662	16,858	16,951	673	711	740	3.8	4.2	4.4	16,989	16,147	16,211
Ketchikan Gateway Bor.	7,318	7,040	7,047	356	423	405	4.9	6.0	5.7	6,962	6,617	6,642
Pr. of Wales-Outer Ketch.	2,966	2,868	2,891	195	235	248	6.6	8.2	8.6	2,771	2,633	2,643
Sitka Borough	4,617	4,404	4,429	192	198	207	4.2	4.5	4.7	4,425	4,206	4,222
Skagway-Yakutat-Angoon	1,871	1,807	1,763	141	163	113	7.5	9.0	6.4	1,730	1,644	1,650
Wrangell-Petersburg	3,947	3,814	3,825	149	204	202	3.8	5.3	5.3	3,798	3,610	3,623
Southwest Region	14,879	14,053	14,540	512	677	581	3.4	4.8	4.0	14,367	13,376	13,959
Aleutians East Borough	1,058	987	1,034	6	8	12	0.6	0.8	1.2	1,052	979	1,022
Aleutians West	2,968	2,777	2,893	22	34	30	0.7	1.2	1.0	2,946	2,743	2,863
Bethel	5,711	5,416	5,604	265	346	313	4.6	6.4	5.6	5,446	5,070	5,291
Bristol Bay Borough	566	529	545	10	12	5	1.8	2.3	0.9	556	517	540
Dillingham	2,656	2,519	2,582	54	97	54	2.0	3.9	2.1	2,602	2,422	2,528
Wade Hampton	1,920	1,825	1,882	155	180	167	8.1	9.9	8.9	1,765	1,645	1,715

Notes: p/ denotes preliminary estimates r/ denotes revised estimates Benchmark: 1989

- Federal guidelines require the use of unrounded labor force data, adjusted to be consistent with the Current Population Survey in formulas used to allocate federal funds.
- Comparisons between different time periods are not as meaningful as other time series published by the Alaska Department of Labor.
- The official definition of unemployment currently in place excludes anyone who has made no attempt to find work in the four-week period up to and including the week that includes the 12th of each month. Most Alaska economists believe that Alaska's rural localities have proportionately more of these discouraged workers.
- The employment numbers that appear above are definitionally different from those that appear in the Nonagricultural Wage & Salary Employment tables.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

Alaska Economic Regions